

REMARKS

This is responsive to the Office Action mailed January 6, 2009 ("Office Action").

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hampden-Smith et al. (US 2005/0112056) in view of Edlund et al. (US 2002/0114984).

Claim 1 discloses a fuel supply apparatus for providing a continuous supply of a hydrogen-rich reformat comprising the following: (1) a reforming reactor comprising a catalyst bed for converting a hydrocarbon fuel to a reformat, the catalyst bed comprising a reforming catalyst and a carbon dioxide fixing material; (2) a hydrogen storage device in fluid communication with the reforming reactor for storing a portion of the reformat; (3) a reformat outlet in fluid communication with the hydrogen storage device; and (4) a controller in communication with the reforming reactor and the hydrogen storage device for controlling the delivery of reformat to the reformat outlet.

According to the Examiner, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to add a controller, as in Edlund, to the communication means from the reforming reactor to the hydrogen storage device of Hampden-Smith as a preferable way of regulating the flow of reformat to the hydrogen storage device and the fuel cell. In addition to the arguments previously presented, Applicant respectfully asserts that the Examiner has failed to provide a clear articulation of the reasons why the claimed invention would have been obvious. MPEP 2142. Instead, the Examiner has provided mere conclusory statements. MPEP 2142. Therefore, the Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 11-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sircar et al. (US 6,103,143) in view of Edlund et al. (US 2002/0114984).

Claim 1 and the claims which depend from claim 1 disclose a fuel supply apparatus for providing a continuous supply of a hydrogen-rich reformat comprising the following: (1) a reforming reactor comprising a catalyst bed for converting a hydrocarbon fuel to a reformat, the catalyst bed comprising a reforming catalyst and a carbon dioxide fixing material; (2) a hydrogen storage device in fluid communication with the reforming reactor for storing a portion of the reformat; (3) a reformat outlet in fluid communication with the hydrogen storage device; and (4) a controller in communication with the reforming reactor and the hydrogen storage device for controlling the delivery of reformat to the reformat outlet.

According to the Examiner, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to add the fuel processing system of Edlund to the reforming reactor of Sircar as a preferable way of providing continuous reformat flow to a fuel cell while maintaining function of said fuel cell when the reforming reactor of Sircar is not functional (such as during regeneration). In addition to the arguments previously presented, Applicant respectfully asserts that the Examiner has failed to provide a clear articulation of the reasons why the claimed invention would have been obvious. MPEP 2142. Instead, the Examiner has provided mere conclusory statements. MPEP 2142. Therefore, the Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-7, and 11-17 under §103(a) is respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection are believed to have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full

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and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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